

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DATE: October 24, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Mason
 Stec
 Champagne
 F. Thomas
 Kenny

Committee Members Absent:

Supervisor Monroe

Vacant: Town of Queensbury

Others Present:

Representing Warren County Economic
Development Corporation:
Leonard Fosbrook, President
Peter Wohl, Director, Adirondack Regional
Business Incubator
John Wheatley, Project Manager, Queensbury
Industrial Park
William H. Thomas, Chairman
Nicholas Caimano, Budget Officer
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
JoAnn McKinstry, Confidential Secretary to the
Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal
Services
Supervisor Gabriels
Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist

In the absence of the Committee Chairman, Mr. Mason, Vice Chairman of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Champagne, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 27, 2006 meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Fosbrook, President of the Economic Development Corporation, who distributed copies of his agenda packet to members of the committee; a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

With respect to the pending items, Mr. Fosbrook stated he would ask Mr. Lamy to update the committee next month on the Exit 18 project.

Regarding pending item 2, Mr. Wohl said they had discussed the community based job training initiative and the grant application that was submitted on behalf of educational and economic development institutions at a previous committee meeting. He stated they recently learned this grant process was highly competitive with over 400 applicants but anticipated an outcome within the next six weeks. Mr. Champagne queried who was responsible for the review process and Mr. Wohl replied the federal Department of Labor (DOL) or the Workforce Investment Board (WIB).

The third pending item, Mr. Fosbrook apprised, was the consolidation of the WCLDC and HRLDC, and he reported a meeting had been scheduled for that afternoon with the Warren County Local Development Corporation (LDC), the Hudson River LDC and some supervisors and he would update the committee next month. Mr. Caimano added he was submitting a letter of resignation and encouraged other elected officials to do the same as they were subjecting themselves to serious risk. Mr. Fosbrook stated a search would be conducted to fill these positions but it was becoming increasingly difficult to find community leaders for these various boards.

Mr. W. Thomas entered the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Addressing pending item 4, Mr. Wheatley apprised the Environmental Facilities Corporation had not made a decision on the pre-applications for the pipeline for jobs program. With respect to the Queensbury Industrial Park (QIP), Mr. Wheatley briefly summarized the activities and milestones that had occurred within the past 30 days. He stated he was happy to report they closed on Lot No. 7 with the National Guard and those funds had been dedicated for the road infrastructure. In addition, he advised a meeting was held with Empire State Development (ESD) and GORR (Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform) for final inspection and they were awaiting a formal declaration. With the QIP becoming a shovel ready site, he said they were one of only 26 State-wide certified sites joining a group of elite industrial parks and districts that had undergone this process. As a side note, Mr. Wheatley commented Tech Meadows (formerly Northway Business Park) had their site inspection performed and was hopeful Warren County would have two additional shovel ready sites. He said he expected within the next 30 days his department would advise the supervisors and committee members of the exact date, time and place of the formal presentation.

Mr. Caimano exited the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

Upon reviewing the upcoming time schedule, Mr. Wheatley said they anticipated the official shovel ready certification and National Grid grant to be finalized in November. In December, he said, he expected the bid documents would be completed and in January of 2007, they would commence the bidding process for the road, which would be the optimum time according to their consultants. He stated he expected the road construction to begin in April and by July the National Guard would begin building their facility in the park. Mr. Fosbrook reiterated full infrastructure would be finalized by Spring 2007 and any businesses that contemplated locating in Warren County would know they did not have to go through a lengthy approval process. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Champagne, Mr. Fosbrook explained the archeological and environmental studies were part of the approval process and the construction of the road was the simple part.

Mr. W. Thomas exited the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Mr. Fosbrook advised they had contacted Senator Little's office to assist the City of Glens Falls in putting the armory on the tax rolls when it became available. In response to questions raised by committee members about the condition of the armory and whether the land would be more valuable with or without the building, Mr. Fosbrook replied he thought the building was in good condition but was hopeful the City of Glens Falls would become the public developer to maintain control of its potential use. He further indicated he thought the City of Glens Falls would hold title to the property thereby providing a higher and better use, such as the Department of Transportation (DOT). Mr. Fosbrook stated if Senator Little assisted in passing legislation that gave the City of Glens Falls the first option to develop the property, then it would bypass any entity such as the Department of Transportation. In order for the EDC to become the public developer, he noted, legislation would have to be introduced as well as a resolution passed by the City of Glens Falls Common Council.

Mr. Fosbrook apprised the sale of the National Guard property (Lot No. 7) generated \$300,000 for the infrastructure of the road. While he was hopeful they would receive a response on the EDA grant, he said the Queensbury Economic Development Corporation (QUEDC) passed a resolution

purchasing property in the park in the amount of \$200,000. In addition, he noted his department requested \$216,000 from the County as well as a \$75,000 grant from National Grid totaling \$1.3 million, which was the estimated total for the entire infrastructure.

Continuing on with the Adirondack Regional Business Incubator (ARBI), Mr. Wohl highlighted some of the major milestones of the project over the past few months. With respect to Brownfields and remediation, he said removal of asbestos and lead paint were put out to bid and should take place over the next few months with an anticipated completion date of January 1, 2007. He stated it was important to note they were looking to identify remediation work because it was 90% reimbursable.

Mr. Wohl indicated the ARBI Facility Design Committee, a subcommittee of the ARBI Board, as well as appropriate leaders of the community, had worked with the architect to complete the initial renderings depicted in the schematic drawings. He said they had attempted to create a state-of-the-art facility at a modest price with some differentiating features such as the clean room on the first floor, which would appeal to the Nanotechnology as well as the medical device manufacturing cluster currently located in Warren County. He indicated the first floor plan also revealed a conference/board room which would be equipped with up-to-date audio/visual equipment, as well as teleconferencing facilities and capabilities. Mr. Wohl further stated some rooms could be converted into classrooms fulfilling ACC's (Adirondack Community College) commitment to offer classes utilizing the developer programmer in the clean room and offer workforce training in anticipation of the jobs they hoped to create in the industries they were targeting. In reviewing the second floor plan, Mr. Wohl apprised all tenant spaces were flexible with only a few permanent walls designated with diagonal lines. He said the experience with the architect had been positive and at the same time he felt they were successful in what they were trying to achieve.

By November, Mr. Wohl said, he expected to receive the cost estimates reflecting any shortfall between the prior and current estimates. He said he expected construction to commence in March/April 2007 and completed by August of 2007, noting approximately 75% of the space was rentable/usable. Furthermore, Mr. Wohl apprised, the builder was extremely positive about the plans and was a huge proponent of the clean space that distinguished their incubator from other incubators in the area. Mr. Champagne expressed his opinion relative to the large yellow reception area being wasteful, but Mr. Wohl responded that area met the law and code requirements. He noted page 3 of the schematic plans depicted the inside lobby area, which appeared smaller than what was shown on page 1. Mr. Wohl stated the architects, Sacco & McKinney, were experienced with remodeling work but not necessarily with incubator projects. In addition, he stated, the clean room and conference area were available to residents, tenants and affiliates of the program, as well as external organizations that would like to rent them for a nominal cost. In summation, he said, this building located at 36 Elm Street that was previously an eyesore was becoming a catalyst project for downtown Glens Falls. Mr. Gabriels queried whether the building was on the National Register of Historic Places and while Mr. Wohl acknowledged it met the criteria, he said if the building were nominated, it would create difficulties with their anticipated plans.

Mr. Wohl apprised they had developed the elements of the program and had provided a brief description but focused on technical assistance, education information and access to capital. He said a brief summary as well as the services provided were included within the agenda based on other incubator programs.

Lastly, Mr. Wohl stated the website for the incubator, which would be revealed shortly, was

extremely interesting, highly innovative and focused on entrepreneurs between the ages of 25 and 40. He said the web address was www.arbi.biz.

Discussion ensued relative to the location of doorways and walls depicted on the schematic drawing.

Mr. Fosbrook commented this building was a catalyst project in an attempt to redevelop downtown Glens Falls. Furthermore, he said, because they were located within the Empire Zone, his department was working with Peter Hoffman and Michael Kaidas on other projects in the City of Glens Falls obtaining various grant funds to improve the facade of the buildings as well as obtaining sales tax abatements.

Continuing on with the last item on the Agenda, Mr. Fosbrook apprised a meeting had been scheduled relative to the Empire Zone. He said they would be discussing zoned capital credits for fundraising concerning requests from the Glens Falls Civic Center Foundation and the Worlds Awareness Childrens Museum. Furthermore, he added, he was required to attend the annual Zone Conference in Rochester from October 25-27, 2006. Mr. Fosbrook explained his department received their budget from New York State, noting there was a \$2,800 decrease due to the addition of 10 zones with no increase in funding.

Mr. Fosbrook mentioned he was happy with the progress that had been made in the Empire Zone, in the businesses in downtown Glens Falls, in the County, as well as the infrastructure at the two industrial parks.

Mr. Mason queried whether Warren County received an interest in the incubator occupancy and Mr. Wohl responded they were attempting to focus on marketing and affiliates who did not want to become tenants but rather participate in the programs they offered. In addition, he indicated on November 14, 2006 there was a meeting with the Business Incubation Association of New York State wherein affiliates could speak to international trade consulates from 20 different nations to identify opportunities for partnerships. Mr. Wohl emphasized the key to the incubator program was not the program elements, rather the network of volunteers, public, professional, civic and community leaders and entrepreneurs within the community.

Mr. Gabriels commented the Town of Bolton had an LDC (local development corporation) and they were faced with three options: 1) maintain it on their own; 2) collapse it to the town; and 3) merge it with the Warren County LDC. Mr. Mason suggested working with Mr. Fosbrook and if it necessitated committee involvement, Mr. Gabriels could bring the matter before the committee at a subsequent meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Mason adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber
Legislative Office Specialist